

## **AIS PROGRAM UPDATE**

The program name has been changed from aquatic nuisance species to aquatic invasive species to be more reflective of the serious nature of problems these species pose to Indiana. The National Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force did approve Indiana's Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan, which made the state eligible for a Federal grant under the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990. A first year funding proposal was prepared that specified what parts of the management plan would be addressed (see attachment). The funding proposal was approved for a \$72,023 grant with a 25% state match. A justification for establishing an Indiana's AIS program was prepared for the administration (see attachment). That justification calls for the creation of full-time AIS coordinator and specifies where the state match will come from and how the program will be administered. Currently, the program is approved by the DNR and a request for the new position will go to the state personnel dept. The cooperative agreement for the federal grant will be signed when all the necessary approvals are gained for the AIS program.

In the mean time, AIS issues continue to take center stage. Construction of a permanent electric dispersal barrier in the Chicago Ship Canal started this Fall. The canal breaches what use to be a natural barrier between the Great Lakes and Mississippi watersheds. Asian carp (see invasive carp attachments) are moving up the Illinois River and threaten to invade lake Michigan. The Corps of Engineers is building the barrier, but recently reported that they did not have enough money to complete the barrier. The Great Lakes state governors had been instrumental in getting the federal funding for the barrier and this was a setback. However, a new appropriations amendment is currently moving through congress with the support of all the Great Lakes states that will provide most of the additional funding. The states reluctantly agreed to each kick in about \$67,000 to keep the project moving.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) recently engaged in its first rapid response effort for a new invasion of Brazilian elodea (see attachment). The plant was discovered in Griffy Lake near Bloomington during a routine fisheries survey. It most likely established itself from someone dumping their aquarium into the lake. The plant will displace nearly all native species and threatens other water bodies if it escapes from the reservoir. With close cooperation with the City of Bloomington, the DFW partially eradicated the

plant around the boat ramp and dock area of the lake to lessen the chance that boaters could inadvertently move this plant to another lake. The City has secured funding from the Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) program in the Division of Soil Conservation for a plant survey of the lake and development of a plant management plan. This plan will make the City eligible to receive LARE funds for potential full eradication of the plant from the lake next year.